

**DRAFT FRAMEWORK
FOR THE RETURN OR RESETTLEMENT
AND REINTEGRATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS
IN NORTHERN UGANDA**

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TERMINOLOGY

Return – In the context of this Framework, *return* is used to describe the process of going back to one's home or place of habitual residence.

Resettlement is used to describe the process of starting a new life in any place other than one's home or place of habitual residence but still within the same country.

Reintegration is used to describe the re-entry of formerly internally displaced people back into the social, economic, cultural and political fabric of their original community.

Integration describes the same or similar process but as it occurs to formerly displaced settling into a new community or deciding to stay in the community where they first found temporary settlement. In both cases material assistance may be needed by returning or resettling internally displaced.

1. PURPOSE

Pursuant to the National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons, the Government of Uganda “commits itself to promote the right of IDPs to return voluntarily, in safety and dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country.” The purpose of this framework is three fold:

- to stimulate the planning process at the national and district level and within individual agencies for return and resettlement and the search for durable solutions;
- to identify the key elements and essential operational considerations that should guide the planning and support provided by the Country Team in the event of a return movement;
- to provide a basis for advocacy with the Government of Uganda aimed at promoting the effective implementation of the National IDP Policy as well as international standards relating to the voluntary, safe and dignified return or resettlement of IDPs.

This framework is concerned primarily with the immediate return or resettlement and reintegration needs of the internally displaced. However, it must be seen as complementary to and linking to the longer-term recovery and rehabilitation plans and activities of the Government, United Nations agencies, donors and other development partners for Northern Uganda, including the return and reintegration of ex-combatants.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

There are approximately 1.6 million IDPs in Uganda. The principal cause of displacement has been armed attacks by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the response of the Government thereto which has included maintaining the civilian population in approximately 218 camps throughout the north. In the worst affected districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, 90% of the Acholi population is displaced.

An unknown number of unregistered displaced persons live with relatives in towns or in camps and settlements in other districts such as Adjumani, Apac, Kaberamaido, Katakwi, Lira, Masindi and Soroti. In Katakwi, a large proportion of the displaced were forced from or fled their homes as a result of attacks by Karamoja warriors.

Services in the camps are extremely limited due to a combination of access constraints, insufficient funding for emergency interventions and uneven presence of humanitarian agencies across the northern districts. While WFP convoys provide life-saving food assistance, most people living in the camps are deprived of such fundamentals as safe water, adequate sanitation and basic education and health services.

Poor and overcrowded living conditions in camps have spawned a range of protection concerns. Issues of concern include infant mortality, sexual violence and abuse, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, early pregnancies, separated families and resort to the transactional sex and recruitment into the Local Defence Units (LDUs) due to economic hardship. In some areas, the conflict has deprived a generation of children of a proper education. These camps have been attacked by the LRA (and in Katakwi, by Karamoja warriors) during which large numbers of the displaced have been killed, injured or abducted.

A geographically-limited ceasefire at the end of last year and ongoing negotiation with the LRA of a memorandum of understanding aimed at ending hostilities and opening the way for formal peace talks, has led to cautious anticipation of a possible peace agreement in Northern Uganda. It appears also to have led to a reduction in security incidents in many conflict-affected areas of the north and east. The improving security situation is also attributable to continued surrenders from the ranks of the LRA; UPDF military operations which, in light of recent statements by the Government appear set to continue; and a more stable security situation in Southern Sudan. It is against this backdrop that there has been increased albeit cautious talk of the possible return or resettlement of IDPs for which the Government, United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners need to plan and prepare.

3. RETURN SCENARIOS

This framework for the return or resettlement and reintegration of IDPs is based around four scenarios that may apply in the coming 12-18 months and which are outlined in the table below.

RETURN PLANNING SCENARIOS	
Scenario	Description
A.	The conflict is brought to an end through the signing of the MOU and the conclusion of a peace agreement that involves the LRA leader, Joseph Kony. This results in increased and widespread confidence in the security situation and large scale, if gradual, return of IDPs from the camps to their villages of origin and their land. This scenario could also conceivably come about through military means.
B.	The conflict is brought to an end through the signing of the MOU and the conclusion of a peace agreement but without the involvement of the LRA leader whose fate remains unknown. This results in a low level of confidence in the security situation which, while likely to improve, prompts only limited return in certain districts and/or a continuation and possible acceleration of the process of planned and spontaneous decongestion of existing camps. IDPs could move to smaller camps from which they are able to access their lands, thereby becoming less dependent on food assistance but requiring increased provision of basic services in the smaller camps.
C.	Negotiation of the MOU fails but there is continued weakening of the LRA through further defections from it ranks; UPDF military operations; and a more stable security situation in South Sudan. Nonetheless, the security situation remains tense as a result of which the majority of IDPs remain in the camps which require enhanced service provision to bring them into line with SPHERE standards and increased protection activities. Planned and spontaneous decongestion continues in some districts, such as Lira, Pader and Soroti, with limited numbers of IDPs moving to smaller camps from which they are able to access their lands, thereby becoming less dependent on food assistance but requiring increased service provision.
D.	Negotiation of the MOU fails and the LRA increases attacks and abductions, prompting further displacement including a reversal in some areas – possibly at the insistence of the Government – of the process of decongestion with the relocation of IDPs to the large camps where they have no access to their land. Food assistance will be required for most IDPs and increased resources will be required to bring camp conditions into line with the SPHERE standards as well as to support protection activities.

Inevitably there is a certain degree of fluidity and differentiation within these scenarios. That is to say that scenarios B and C could slide into scenario D at anytime. The impact of the signing of the MOU and subsequent talks and conclusion of a peace agreement will be district-specific. This, in turn, will have implications for return, resettlement and reintegration activities that should be considered.

For example, the rates and patterns of return, resettlement and/or planned or spontaneous decongestion are likely to be more pronounced in the districts of Soroti and Lira which were less affected by the conflict and where the displacement has been of a shorter duration, than more

conflict-affected districts such as Gulu. Given that fewer humanitarian actors are present to support the district authorities in Kitgum, Lira, Pader and Soroti compared to Gulu, there will be a need for increased capacity in these areas, at least in the short term. Similarly, while resolution of the conflict between the Government and the LRA will allow the return and resettlement of the majority of the displaced in the northern districts, in the absence of the resolution of the Karamoja issue, a significant number of displaced persons in Katakwi will remain in camps where they require – and urgently so – increased levels of protection and assistance. In addition to the Karamajong, other non-LRA specific security concerns will continue such as acts of banditry and LDU and militia activity which could slow down movements in scenarios A to C.

In all scenarios, decision-making by IDPs is likely to follow their detailed assessments (over extended periods) of security issues (first), the possibility for renewed livelihood and shelter in return areas (second), and the availability of key services (third).

4. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE RETURN PLANNING PROCESS

There are a number of key elements that must be taken into account in the planning process in order to ensure that the return or resettlement and reintegration of the internally displaced is voluntary, safe and dignified as well as sustainable:

- **Awareness** – Ensure that the displaced are informed of their rights as provided for in the National IDP Policy and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
- **Participation** – Ensure that the views of the displaced, particularly women and children, are actively and continually integrated into the planning and management of the return or resettlement process. IDPs will often possess the most accurate information on conditions affecting their return and will be in the best position to judge their needs.
- **Information** – Establish mechanisms for the assessment and dissemination of accurate information on conditions in areas of return and the return movements.
- **Protection** – Ensure monitoring and tracking of the return and resettlement process, including ensuring that the principle of voluntary, safe and dignified return and other rights provided for in the National IDP Policy are upheld and addressed if necessary, including that no one is deprived of shelter during the return or resettlement process.
- **Women and Children and Other Vulnerable Groups** – Ensure throughout the return or resettlement and reintegration process that specific attention is paid to the protection of vulnerable groups among the displaced population, including but not limited to women and children, in particular female and child-headed households, unaccompanied minors, persons with HIV/AIDS, older persons and the disabled.
- **Community Reconciliation** – Ensure that the return or resettlement of IDPs is complementary to the reintegration and rehabilitation of ex-combatants and former abductees through appropriate community reconciliation activities.
- **Recovery and Rehabilitation** – Ensure that the return and resettlement planning process complements and supports the longer-term recovery and rehabilitation plans of the Government and donors.

- **Supporting Return Not Creating It** – Consideration must be given to the manner in which and the extent to which the distribution of assistance influences IDP decision-making and return movement.
- **Capacity Building** – Assess, learn from, invest in and assure parallel capacity in time of need.

5. RETURN PLANNING PHASES

The return or resettlement and reintegration process can be divided into a series of phases and activities as shown in the table below.

RETURN PLANNING PHASES AND ACTIVITIES			
Phase	I – Assessment and Preparation	II – Supporting Return or Resettlement	III – Linking to Recovery and Rehabilitation
Activities	Overall Assessment of return areas. Return profiling. Developing a protection of civilians security plan. Protection monitoring, reporting and intervention. Improving humanitarian access. Identifying resettlement options. Coordination. Capacity building. Public information - Rights Awareness and Mine Risk Education. Determining return and reintegration assistance, including livelihood support and basic services.	Enunciation of policy and process. Ensuring humanitarian access and equal humanitarian Coverage. Ensuring protection of civilians. Coordination, protection monitoring and information. Camp support, consolidation and closure. Property and land. Psycho-social support and community reconciliation. Delivering return and reintegration assistance, including livelihood support and basic services.	Livelihood support. Rehabilitation of basic services. Access to justice and restoration of the rule of law. Disarmament and demobilisation of LDUs and militia.

PHASE I – ASSESSMENT AND PREPARATION

Overall Assessment of Return Areas

- Assessment of return areas is essential for effective planning for the return and reintegration of the internally displaced and for allowing them to make an informed choice regarding their return. Access issues notwithstanding, it is also a process that can begin now and is crucial in relation to the ongoing decongestion or interim returns.
- Return areas should be assessed in terms of:
 - **Protection of physical safety**, particularly with regard to threats to personal security through the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance.
 - **Legal safety**. Most important among the elements of legal safety is equal access to, and protection of the judicial system and the police and rule of law apparatus. Other aspects of legal safety include protection from discrimination or persecution and access to land.
 - **Food security and basic services**: Assessments must also take into account the extent to which return areas are able to support returnees in terms of the level of food security, access to basic services such as WATSAN, health and education services and re-establishing their livelihoods through access to land, markets and employment

opportunities. With regard to infrastructure such as clinics, schools and water points, information on the quantity and location of such infrastructure exists at the district level. The status of such infrastructure should be verified in order to plan for its rehabilitation.

- Assessment of existing infrastructure should be undertaken with the active involvement of line ministries.

Action: Agreement at the national level on assessment methodology and establishment of a programme for district level assessments of return areas.

Return Profiling

- There should be some sort of profiling of the IDP population, including basic baseline data such as their health status, as well as their intentions with regard to return or resettlement. This will assist with monitoring and the delivery of assistance and with the identification of particularly vulnerable individuals among returnees, such as female, single or child headed households, unaccompanied children, older and disabled persons, persons with HIV/AIDS, and others who may require specific assistance to return.

Action: Agreement on the methodology, scope and purpose of a profiling exercise, including on the specific information that is required for the return planning process.

Developing a Protection of Civilians Security Plan

- To ensure security and maintain the confidence of the displaced in the return process (thereby ensuring the sustainability of the process) steps must be taken to ensure adequate presence of the UPDF and national police in areas of return.
- UPDF should be encouraged to develop a plan outlining the steps it will take to ensure security in return areas.

Protection Monitoring, Reporting and Intervention

- An essential element of the return process is the establishment of a monitoring and reporting process to anticipate or identify and address problems early on and to ensure that return takes place voluntarily and under conditions of safety and dignity. This includes ensuring protection against threats to the right to life and personal security. Specific attention should be paid to protection from arbitrary and summary execution, protection from attacks and other acts of generalized violence, protection from enforced disappearances and ill-treatment, including torture.
- The Country Team is developing a protection strategy which includes the establishment of a monitoring and reporting process. Key actors in this regard are the Uganda Human Rights Commission which has limited capacity in the north and could, with additional resources and capacity play an important role in the monitoring and reporting process. UNICEF is currently recruiting protection monitors and both the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the High Commissioner for Refugees (only in the case of a significant return movement) are considering a protection presence in the North. There are also a number of national human rights NGOs who could participate in the monitoring process.
- Ultimately, given the current limited capacity of individual actors and possible security and access restrictions on the presence of UN agencies in return areas, it will be essential that any monitoring and reporting process is inclusive of the various actors that are in a position to contribute.
- There is also need to monitor and report on conditions in areas of Tesoland where the process of interim return is underway, both to ensure the voluntary, safe and dignified

nature of the return but also to establish a more accurate picture of the problems confronting those displaced by Karamajong.

Action: Finalisation of the national protection strategy and the strengthening of mechanisms for systematic monitoring and reporting on protection issues.

Improving Humanitarian Access

- The effective support of the Country Team for the return, or resettlement and reintegration of IDPs will depend to a very large extent on staff security and unimpeded access to affected populations – both in the camps and in areas of return.
- The Country Team must consider what action it will take in the event that the MOU between the Government and the LRA is signed. The MOU contains specific provisions on the protection of the civilian population and free and unhindered humanitarian access and which will necessitate a review of the current access restrictions on UN agencies and the use of armed escorts.
- The Country Team might also consider its role in leading and facilitating security coordination for the broader humanitarian community.

Action: Country team discussion on the implications of the signing of the MOU for the current security arrangements and use of escorts.

Identifying Resettlement Options

- Not all IDPs are going to return home. In Gulu for example, in 2003 it was estimated that 20% of the IDP population would prefer to remain where they are or be resettled elsewhere in the country, as provided for in the National IDP Policy. Profiling of the IDP population (see above) will be essential for determining IDP intentions.
- Consideration must be given to what resettlement options exist for such persons who currently reside in camps on privately owned land that will, once the return process begins, reasonably be expected to return to its owners.
- Particular attention must be given to the resettlement and indeed return options for orphaned children.
- Consideration should also be given to those displaced in Katakwi as a result of the activities of Karamoja warriors who are unlikely to return to their villages in the foreseeable future. In particular, alternatives to the current (and insufficient) approach of care and maintenance should be considered.

Action: Discussion with the national and district authorities of resettlement options for those who do not wish to return.

Coordination and Information Management

- Pursuant to the National IDP Policy, primary responsibility for the planning and coordination of the return and resettlement process at the district level lies with the District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs).
- A clear division of roles and responsibilities should be established ahead of time within the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and vis-à-vis the DDMCs; and between other relevant actors including security forces (the UPDF and national police), IDP leaders, local authorities, UN agencies and national and international NGOs.
- In Gulu, steps are being taken to establish a Return and Resettlement Committee, chaired by the CAO and OCHA and responsible for drawing up the district return and resettlement plan by the end of March 2005. Similar steps should be considered both at the national level, under the leadership of OPM and the Humanitarian Coordinator/OCHA and in other displacement-affected districts.

- An essential component of coordination will be effective information management. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a centre where information on the security situation and assessments of the level of basic services in return areas can be posted and regularly updated and made available to interested parties. Efforts should also be made to disseminate such information among IDP leaders and in camps.

Capacity Building

- Capacity building and support for DDMCs will be essential if they are to assume the lead role in planning and coordinating the return or resettlement process. This must involve training and planning support plus material assistance and could involve several agencies. The planned deployment with the support of UNDP of District Coordinators (as provided for in the National IDP Policy) will be an important contribution to this and should be expanded to include Kitgum and Pader. Similar support must also be considered for sub-county administrations who will require assistance in re-establishing themselves.
- Capacity building activities for IDPs need also to be considered so as to reduce their vulnerability now and in the future.

Public Information – Rights Awareness and Mine Risk Education

- To ensure the voluntary, safe and dignified return or resettlement of IDPs, it is essential that the IDPs are informed of their rights as stipulated in the National IDP Policy, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Constitution of Uganda. As provided for in the National IDP Policy, suitable dissemination and awareness activities should be undertaken to this end. Particular emphasis should be placed on the right of IDPs to recover their land and property.
- While the use of landmines in Uganda has not been on a scale akin to that of places such as Angola, landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXOs) nonetheless constitute a significant threat to the safety and well-being of returning IDPs, and the civilian population in general, as well as humanitarian staff assisting in areas of return. Given the pattern of landmine use in Uganda, large-scale demining is unlikely to be a feasible nor necessarily cost-effective option and efforts will need to focus on demarcation and mine clearance as and where required. In this connection, it will be critically important to expand mine risk education activities in camps as well as communities where displaced persons reside with host families, as well as to establish a database of mine accidents.

Determining Return and Reintegration Assistance, including Livelihood Support and Basic Services

- Consideration must be given to the precise support that will be provided to returning IDPs. Provision of non-food items (NFIs), specifically kitchen sets and household items should be assessed according to need and whether this type of assistance is genuinely required or will become a commodity for sale. There seems to be some level of consensus that NFI kits should be distributed in emergency situations only, such as in the case of new displacement or after camps fires when a genuine need exists.
- Emphasis should be placed on planning for the provision of livelihood support, particularly seeds and tools, and the availability of basic services in return areas.
- Careful consideration must be given to the possible impact of assistance in terms of facilitating or promoting return. In scenario A, the emphasis should be given to promoting return and providing assistance in areas of return. In scenarios B and C, UN agencies should be careful to facilitate and support return, i.e., the provision of assistance and services in areas of return should respond to, rather than dictate, the wishes and movement of IDPs themselves.

Action: Country Team to agree on the types of return and reintegration assistance to be provided to returnees and on the timing and criteria for phasing out general assistance in favour of limited return assistance at the sub-county level.

PHASE II – SUPPORTING RETURN

The precise patterns and rates of return or resettlement in Uganda will be dictated largely by the prevailing security situation as indicated in the different scenarios outlined in part 2 above. While it is not possible to predict which, if any, of these scenarios will apply in the coming 12-18 months it might be assumed that the pattern of return will resemble one or a combination of the following:

- Large scale, if gradual, return direct to home areas, possibly involving the return of male family members (with only few supporting female members) first who will clear the land, plant crops and construct shelter. Other females, the elderly and children might be expected to remain in the camps.
- Continuation of the ongoing process of 'interim return' or decongestion, i.e., planned or spontaneous movement from large camps to smaller camps nearer areas of origin and from which IDPs are able to access their land.

Whichever of these return scenarios apply, the Country Team should consider appropriate interventions in respect of the following:

Enunciation of Policy and Process

- While the conclusion of the MOU may prompt an increase in interim return in some districts, it is clear that the majority of IDPs will not return to their original villages until:
 - The conflict has been brought to an end, either militarily or through the conclusion of a peace agreement and Kony is no longer considered to pose a threat to their security.
 - The Government announces that IDPs can return to their villages. This is particularly relevant for those IDPs that were ordered by the UPDF to move from their villages to 'protected camps'. Such an announcement is seen as providing some assurance of security from LRA attack in return areas and also against being ordered back to the protected camps and against suspicion and harassment by the UPDF or LDUs for visiting their original villages and accessing their lands.
- With these considerations in mind, an early and necessary prerequisite for a successful return process - facilitated and/or spontaneous - will be a strong and demonstrable commitment to return and resettlement at both the national and district levels.
- A clear statement of policy of return and resettlement by the Government must be premised on the conditions of voluntariness, safety and dignity, as provided for in the National IDP Policy. Emphasis should also be placed on the fact that interim return does not preclude return to villages of origin when security conditions allow.

Ensuring Protection of Civilians

- As indicated, to ensure security and maintain the confidence of the displaced in the return process (thereby ensuring the sustainability of the process) the UPDF must ensure the adequate presence of the UPDF and national police in areas of return.
- The civilian population should be fully involved in achieving security by establishing an early warning system to indicate when possible threats are in the area. There should be regular contact between community representatives and security detachments.

Ensuring Humanitarian Access and Equal Humanitarian Coverage

- As indicated, effective support and monitoring of the return or resettlement process by UN agencies will depend to a large extent on security and unimpeded humanitarian access (see above).

Coordination, Protection Monitoring and Information

- The coverage of humanitarian agencies in the north of the country is uneven and at times insufficiently coordinated with the district authorities. In line with the National IDP Policy, the Department for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, in cooperation and with the support of UN agencies, in particular OCHA, must assume a lead role in determining districts where humanitarian capacity is weak and where additional capacity is required. The registration and profiling exercise and needs assessments in areas of return will provide an important basis in this regard.
- A similar process should be lead at the district level by the DDMC, again with the support of OCHA and other UN agencies.
- Systematic tracking and monitoring of return movements by DDMCs and OCHA will be essential, both for the purposes of responding to protection concerns, including possible conflicts relating to land, and targeting reintegration assistance where it is most needed.

Action: Agree on methodology for the tracking of return movements.

Camp Support, Consolidation and Closure

- As the return process commences, be it full or interim return, the number of IDPs remaining in some of the camps will reduce. Plans for the consolidation and/or phase-out of the camps will need to be prepared with a view reducing the number of camps so that camp areas can be returned to their former use.
- Plans will also need to examine the possibilities to relocate remaining IDPs to alternative campsites or provide resettlement support if their camp is to be closed.

Action: Development of a policy on the issue of camp closures and consolidation.

Land and Property

- Ensuring respect for land and property rights will be an essential component of return monitoring.
- It will be important to clearly outline in the policy on return (see 'clear enunciation of policy and process') the legal position of affected IDPs with respect to all aspects of their land and property rights.
- Both the rights of IDPs and the rights of those who choose resettlement in urban areas should be fully secured such that no person becomes homeless in the process.
- Concrete measures, including capacity building of local dispute resolution mechanisms, will need to be established to ensure fair and expeditious adjudication of property disputes.
- Particular attention will need to be paid to the needs of returning women heads of households and orphaned children to assist them to reclaim access to property through customary tenure certificates.

Psycho-Social Support and Community Reconciliation

- For many, return to their villages of origin may be a traumatic experience to the extent to which such villages were the scene of abductions, massacres and other atrocities. Psycho-social support for returnees will be an essential component of the support to the return process and towards ensuring its sustainability.
- Connected to this is the overriding need for community reconciliation activities, including strengthening of the local council courts system, as returning IDPs and ex-combatants and abductees return to villages.
- Consideration should also be given to more focused follow-up of formerly abducted children, as well as night commuters and youth remaining in towns.

Delivering Return and Reintegration Assistance, including Livelihood Support and Basic Services

- In the event of a large-scale return movement, depending on the time of year and the availability of livelihood support, specifically seeds and tools, consideration will need to be given to the continued provision of food assistance (beyond the planned return or resettlement ration) as well as the provision of shelter materials such as plastic sheeting.
- Service provision will be essentially demand driven and as such the response will need to be flexible and mobile (for example, mobile clinics).
- UN agencies and NGOs will need to consider how anticipated return movements and the dispersal of the displaced population across districts and in more remote areas will impact on existing programmes and capacity. Consideration will need to be given to what additional resources will be required to meet the needs of returnees and when.

PHASE III – LINKING TO LONG-TERM RECOVERY AND RECONCILIATION

For the return or resettlement process to be sustainable it will be essential that the necessary linkages are established with the longer-term recovery and rehabilitation of return areas. Particular areas of concern in this regard include:

Livelihood Support

- Along with security and access to basic services, support for livelihoods, in particular through the timely provision of seeds and tools, either as return becomes possible or the displaced move to camps closer to their areas of origin and from which they are able to access their lands, will be a critical factor determining the rate of return and reintegration. If the displaced are to return to their villages and lands and become self sufficient they must be supported to do so.
- In the longer term, consideration should be given to issues of improving farming techniques and seed quality. Discussion of issues such as large-scale mechanised farming should wait until after IDPs have returned to their villages of origin and should be undertaken in full consultation with returnees. Ensuring such consultation takes place will require pro-active advocacy with the authorities.

Rehabilitation of Basic Services

- The availability of basic services in return areas will be an essential element in both encouraging and sustaining the return of the displaced, particularly women and children. Line ministries should be actively involved in the rehabilitation of basic services and infrastructure.
- It is anticipated that the initial return movement will involve male family members while women and children remain in the camps where they may have access to education, health and water services. The rehabilitation of these services in return areas is likely to increase the return of other family members and the emptying of the camps.

- Particularly important in terms of services is access to education. Indications are that displaced families will prefer to leave their children in camps (which may give rise to protection concerns) where they have access to schooling than to have them return to home areas where such services are unavailable or where access to schooling would require commuting long distances each day between the area of return and the camp.
- In improving access to both health and education services, consideration will need to be given to ways of encouraging health and teaching staff to return to the sub-county and parish level. This may include support for accommodation and other incentives as well as encouraging a more robust approach from district authorities such disciplinary action.

Access to Justice and Restoration of the Rule of Law

- As already indicated, concrete measures, including capacity building of local dispute resolution mechanisms, will need to be established to ensure fair and expeditious adjudication of property but also other civil disputes.
- More precisely, steps will need to taken to support the restoration and capacity building in return areas of Council Courts which have jurisdiction over a range of issues that are of key concern to woman and marginalized groups such as domestic violence, divorce and inheritance, children’s rights, petty theft, land disputes and minor contracts.
- Efforts will also need to be undertaken to increase community policing in areas of return thereby lessening dependency on LDUs for the provision of security (see below).

Disarmament and Demobilisation of LDUs and Militia

- While the LDUs have played a significant role in the protection of the displaced during the conflict (but have also been implicated in human rights abuses against the displaced) they are not institutionally equipped to carry-out a policing role in a post-conflict environment. Plans for the disarmament of demobilisation of LDUs and militia, or their integration into the UPDF, must be put in place.

6. NEXT STEPS

Country Team

- Country Team consideration and discussion of the draft Framework for the Return or Resettlement and Reintegration of IDPs in Northern Uganda and agreement on action points. Some of the specific issues identified in this Framework document that need further discussion include:
 - assessment methodologies;
 - the modalities of undertaking a return registration and profiling;
 - methodology for tracking return movements;
 - on the types of return assistance and the phasing out of general assistance;
 - camp support, consolidation and closure;
 - discussion with the national and district authorities of resettlement options for those who do not wish to return;
 - discussion of the implications of the MOU for the current security arrangements and the reliance on armed escorts.

- Agreement on follow-up mechanisms including the process of consultation with national actors and international and national NGOs on planning for return. This could include for example the establishment of a focal point, steering committee or similar mechanism within the Country Team.

- Finalisation of the national protection strategy and the strengthening of mechanisms for systematic monitoring and reporting on protection issues.

- The preparation of a document outlining the roles, responsibilities and activities of different UN agencies in the context of return, current funding levels for such activities and critical gaps for which additional capacity and resources are required. Particular attention should be paid to the issue of triggers, i.e., at what point does the Country Team need to increase its activities in return areas and what sort of funding mechanism is needed to raise the additional resources?

- More detailed assessment of the situation of IDPs in districts such as Adjumani and Katakwi (where the return of those displaced as a result of the Karamojong is extremely unlikely) leading to the implementation of a more appropriate response in these districts.

Government

- Use implementation of the National IDP Policy and mechanisms therein as forums for discussion of planning and implementation of the Framework. This would include the Inter-Ministerial Policy Committee and the Inter-Agency Technical Committee as well as DDMCs and Human Rights Protection and Promotion Sub Committees.

- Discussions at these forums should include ensuring the incorporation of return elements and planning into existing recovery and development plans of line ministries, and the drafting of a more specific national plan on the return or resettlement and reintegration of IDPs in the North.

- Establishment of similar mechanisms at the district level charged with drawing up district specific return or resettlement action plans as well as to reinforce exchanges between the OPM and the districts. In this regard, in Gulu a planning workshop was conducted at the end of January and OCHA has agreed to work with the authorities in Kitgum and Pader to run similar workshops in these two districts.

ANNEX 1 – SUMMARY OF THE IDP POPULATION AS OF 22 JUNE 2004

DISTRICT	DISTRICT POPULATION	IDP POPULATION (October 2003)	IDP POPULATION (June 2004)	NO. OF CAMPS
GULU	468,407	419,258	438,639	33
KITGUM	286,122	281,372	279,589	18
PADER	293,679	229,115	273,968	28
LIRA	575,763	79,097	293,996	54
SOROTI	371,986	136,112	34,000	38
KATAKWI	307,032	104,254	117,008	59
KABERAMAIDO	122,924	97,561	32,520	08
KUMI	388,015	59,207	-	-
ADJUMANI	201,495	-	20,314	Hosted
KOTIDO	596,130	3,000	2,250	Hosted
APAC	676,244	-	29,275	06
TOTAL	4,287,797	1,407,976	1,639,017	218

Source: Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Disaster Preparedness